

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of charging for a voice call, the voice call comprises is represented by a voice signals signal transmitted by a call source device and received by the call source device, comprising the steps of:

connecting a gateway to the call source device, the gateway capable to receive transmitted voice signal from the call source device;

providing a packetized voice network of a plurality of communicatively interconnected nodes, each node capable of communicating to and from each other node of the plurality;

connecting a the gateway to the call source device and to the packetized voice network, wherein the gateway comprises at least one of the plurality of communicatively interconnected nodes via an ingress node that is at least one of the plurality;

linking the voice call through the gateway, to the call source device and an intended recipient, throughout duration of the voice call;

converting, at the gateway, the voice signals signal at the gateway transmitted by the call source device for the voice call; to a packetized voice signal of packetized digital data representative of the voice signal, if the signal at if the gateway are not received as a not received at the gateway as the packetized digital data representative of the voice signal, the packetized digital data comprising a number of individual digitized information units;

delivering the packetized voice signal by the gateway to the ingress node;

communicating, via the packetized voice network, the packetized voice signal by the ingress node to at least one other node of the plurality;

determining, via the gateway packetized voice network, a the number characteristic of the packetized digital data representative of the voice signals transmitted by the call source device to the gateway; and

obtaining the number from the gateway; and

preparing a bill for the voice call based on the number from the step of obtaining.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the packetized voice network communicates a plurality of distinct different voice calls initiated external to the packetized voice network, linked to the packetized voice network through the gateway, at least certain of the plurality can, but need not necessarily, be transmitted by a different respective call source device.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method of claim 2, wherein the step of obtaining determining is performed, respectively, for each respective call source device for a predetermined period, and the step of preparing further comprising the step of:

aggregating the number for each respective call source device over the predetermined period to obtain a respective result for each respective call source device for the predetermined period;

wherein the step of preparing the bill is performed invoicing, respectively, for each respective call source device in accord with and employs the respective result.

Claim 4 (cancelled).

Claim 5 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the packetized voice network communicates the packetized voice signal among respective ones of the plurality of nodes via voice over internet protocol (VOIP).

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining the number employs a network management protocol aspect and the step of obtaining includes communication of digital data representative of the number.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the voice calls include modem calls.

Claim 8 (canceled).

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the gateway is communicatively coupled to a public switched telephone network to receive the transmitted voice signal signals transmitted by the call source device for the voice call.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the gateway is also communicatively coupled to a second packetized data network that is not the packetized voice network.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the step of preparing the bill employs a component selected from the group consisting of: the number, an average of the number during a time period, and a peak of the number over time.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A computer program product encoded in at least one computer readable medium to implement a billing program for a packetized network carrying voice traffic, the voice traffic comprised of digital data units corresponding to voice calls initiated external to the packetized network and input to the packetized network via a gateway to the packetized network, the gateway links the respective voice calls through the gateway throughout duration of the voice calls, the packetized network comprises a plurality of intercommunicative nodes, comprising:

a first instruction sequence executable to obtain retrieve from the gateway at least one node of the packetized network a measure of network utilization associated with a respective one of the voice calls throughout duration of the respective one made through received at the gateway, the measure relating to a number of the digital data units comprising the respective one of the voice calls; and

a second instruction sequence executable to determine a charge in respect of the number.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The computer program product of claim 12, wherein the measure is a function of an average of the number over a period of time.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The computer program product of claim 12, wherein

the measure is a function of a peak of the number during a period of time.

Claims 15-28 (canceled).

Claim 29 (currently amended): A method of charging for a voice call, the voice call is initiated by a device communicatively connected to a call node of a packetized voice network comprised of a plurality of intercommunicating nodes, the call node is capable of communicating a packetized voice signal of packetized digital data representative of the voice call among the plurality of nodes, comprising the steps of:

connecting the voice call through the call node a gateway to the packetized voice network;

linking the voice call through the call node throughout duration of the voice call;
determining, via the packetized voice network, a number of individual digitized information units of the packetized voice signal;

connecting the call node gateway to a gateway to the packetized voice network of
a call recipient device, the gateway capable to deliver the voice call, received by the
gateway from the call node over the packetized voice network, to the call recipient device;

converting the packetized voice signal received at the gateway, to a voice signal
~~of format~~ understandable by the call recipient device, ~~at the gateway~~ prior to delivery of
the voice call to the call recipient device, if not otherwise understandable by ~~required for~~
~~delivery of the voice signal to the call recipient device;~~ and

preparing a bill for the voice call based on the number.

Claim 30 (cancelled).